

Listing of Claims:

1. - 10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a thin slab having broad faces with a predetermined convexity in a continuous casting installation, in which ~~an~~ a spade-shaped immersion nozzle protrudes into a mold composed of broad and narrow faces followed by a strand guiding means for guiding the slab which comprises a strand shell surrounding a liquid sump, said process comprising the steps of:

- a) forming broad faces of the strand shell to have planar surfaces in a region of the spade-shaped immersion nozzle using central parts of the mold broad face, wherein widths of the planar surfaces extend in parallel directions and lengths of the planar surfaces taper conically toward a slab guiding direction;
- b) shaping said broad faces of the strand shell with planar side surfaces of the mold broad face that taper conically toward to the narrow faces, in which the side surfaces of the mold broad face are at an angle to the central parts;
- c) in a strand casting direction, feeding parts of the slab broad faces shaped with planar surfaces conically to each other up to 40 to 60 % of the mold length to such a degree that lateral edges of the faces adapt themselves to ends of the planar side surfaces of the slab broad faces tapering conically with respect to narrow faces of the slab, wherein the mold includes ~~tapered~~ wedge-shaped connecting pieces joined with the central parts and side parts of the broad faces, and wherein the central part extends past sides of the spade-shaped immersion nozzle; and

d) subsequently, in a mouth region of the mold at a slab exit end of the mold and after leaving the mold, maintaining convexity formed by in each case three planar surface parts of the broad faces of the strand shell constant in its form as far as a lowest point of a liquid crater of the slab ~~using a plurality of rollers arranged in a plane perpendicular to a flow direction through the mold, the plurality of rollers including linear split rollers including linear central rollers and linear side rollers arranged so that axes of the central rollers and the side rollers are at an angle to one another.~~

12. (previously presented) A process as defined in claim 11, including reducing slab thickness in a region of a strand guiding framework by only deforming the narrow faces of the slab.

13. (currently amended) A process as defined in claim 11, wherein the tapered wedge-shaped connecting pieces between the central part of the slab, located in the region of the spade-shaped immersion nozzle, and the slab broad-face parts tapering conically toward the narrow faces are given a form which encloses an angle $\alpha < 5^\circ$ in a longitudinal direction of the central parts of the slab and represents a crowned surface which, having a central point of inflection, adjoins tangentially at its edges to two neighboring surfaces.

14. (currently amended) A continuous casting installation for producing a thin slab, comprising:

a laterally adjustable mold, the mold having broad side parts, narrow side parts, a large crowned cross-section on a charging side and a cross-section, opposite the crowned cross-

section, on a strand outlet side which is smaller than the crowned cross-section and identically crowned in a central region;

~~an a spade-shaped~~ immersion nozzle that protrudes into the mold, the immersion nozzle having a mouth with a maximum thickness (d) corresponding to $d = 0.3 \text{ to } 0.5 \times D_E$, where D_E is a distance between the mold broad side parts in a charging region, the broad side parts of the mold having, at least in a region of the immersion nozzle, central parts comprising planar surfaces which have widths extending in parallel directions and taper conically in a slab direction, and planar side surfaces, the planar side surfaces being arranged so that they taper conically toward each other ~~in a direction of to~~ the narrow side parts, the central part being connected to the planar side surfaces by wedge-shaped transitional parts, the wedge-shaped transitional parts tapering toward each other and having a tip that ends at a distance (a), measured from an upper edge of the mold, with $a = 0.5 \text{ to } 0.8 \times L$, where L is the length of the mold; and

~~a plurality of supporting and guiding rollers which follow the mold and have a caliber for receiving an emerging crowned strand, the supporting and guiding rollers having a contour which corresponds to the central part and the side parts of the mold broad side parts in a region of a mouth at a strand exit end of the mold, the supporting and guiding rollers including linear split rollers, the split rollers each having a linear surface in a plane tangent to a circumference of the roller, the split rollers including central rollers and side rollers arranged so that axes of the central rollers and the side rollers are at an angle to one another whereby the caliber is formed by a plurality of the rollers lying in a plane perpendicular to a flow direction through the mold.~~

15. (previously presented) A continuous casting installation as defined in claim 14, wherein the central parts are planar surfaces which move conically toward each other in a strand conveying direction at an angle $\alpha = 5$ to 10° with $a = 0.5$ to $0.8 \times L$.

16. (currently amended) A continuous casting installation as defined in claim 14, wherein the central parts are shaped with planar surfaces in the region of the spade-shaped immersion nozzle up to $a = 0.5$ to $0.8 \times L$ and are arranged so as to be disposed parallel to one another, the mold further having connecting parts with contour lines, the connecting parts being parallel with respect to their contours contour lines and having, in a strand conveying direction, and an S-shaped form, the wedge-shaped transitional parts following the S-shaped form of the connecting part in their longitudinal extent up to the tip.

17. (currently amended) A continuous casting installation as defined in claim 14, wherein the wedge-shaped transitional parts are shaped as a crowned surface, the crowned surface tangentially adjoining at one end, a respective slab side part and at the other end, the slab central part and having a central point of inflection.

18. (currently amended) A continuous casting installation as defined in claim 14, wherein the supporting and guiding rollers comprise split rollers, the split rollers having bearings provided in a region of the central part.

19. (previously presented) A continuous casting installation as defined in claim 14, and further comprising rollers which are designed cylindrically in a central region and

conically in side regions, with a diameter which enlarges outwardly so as to correspond to shaping of the slab.

20. (previously presented) A continuous casting installation as defined in claim 14, and further comprising means for cooling the transitional parts.

21. (new) A continuous casting installation as defined in claim 14, wherein a cross-section of the mold throughout a region of the mold below the wedge-shaped transitional parts corresponds to the cross-section on the strand outlet side of the mold.

22. (new) A process defined in claim 11, wherein a cross-section of the mold throughout a region of the mold below the wedge-shaped transitional parts corresponds to the cross-section on the strand outlet side of the mold.